

Mayor's Cabinet Meeting Highlights Tuesday December 2, 2013

Below are highlights from the December 2, 2013 Mayor's Cabinet meeting, a monthly meeting with the mayor and City commission chairs or their representatives. Please note that this meeting is intended to exchange information on commission activities; no official actions are taken.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Architectural Commission – Chair James Blakeley

In the past month, the commission considered 17 projects. Many of them were projects that came back after making changes and the owners thanked the commission for helping make the projects better.

Recently the commission gave direction for a sign concept at the Crescent Hotel, but it was not followed. The commission compromised with the owner and a solution was reached. Two signage projects at Chase Bank and Kreation juice bar were supposed to be changed based on direction from the commission, but the changes still have not been done after several months. Staff was asked to provide an update on those projects. Commissioners would like to have more oversight over signage and would like to make a motion for a study session discussion; right now about 60% of signs are approved by staff. The commission will consider a proposal to require a completion bond on projects so that the contractor is involved with installing signage.

Charitable Solicitations Commission – Chair Alissa Roston

The commission revised the financial reporting forms to gather more information from the charities. They also are asking the charity to verify that they have filed their 990 reports. Commissioners are looking more carefully at these reports and reviewing the charities more regularly to get the bigger picture on fundraising practices. The commission is now requiring hard copies of the permit be sent out with the invitations to fundraisers. In some cases, the commission has found that some charities are designated 501c4, rather than 501c3, which donors may not realize.

Cultural Heritage Commission – Chair Rich Waldow

The commission is continuing the move toward landmark consideration of Beverly Hills' properties; the goal is at least three a quarter. At the next meeting on Jan. 8, they will continue consideration of the Water Treatment Plant, the Union 76 station and a number of others. A number of homeowners have approached the commission to ask that their homes be landmarked and the commission will be looking at those as well.

Demolition applications are given a 30-day hold and come to the commission for evaluation of whether if they should be preserved. Several demolition permit applications have been filed for properties in Trowsdale recently.

Homeowners or potential buyers can apply for a letter stating that their home is not likely to be designated a historic site. Any decision can be appealed to the commission.

The commission is moving forward with the process to designate the Neff house as a historic site.

The commission vice chair has met with resident Phil Savenick to discuss working together on the Centennial video oral history project. At the next meeting, the City Council will discuss extending the Mills Act program and granting a Mills Act contract to the Annenberg Center for the Performing Art.

Design Review Commission – Chair Arline Pepp

The commission is unanimous in its belief that the same standards for single family homes should be applied in every part of the city – not just the central area. The City Council will consider expanding Design Review jurisdiction to the hillside areas at the Dec. 5 study session and commission members may speak at the meeting. Regarding criteria for reducing bulk and mass, some cities use the average setback of the houses in the neighborhood, on all sides, as criteria, so it fits in with streetscape. The commission is interested in considering this as criteria in Beverly Hills.

Fine Art Commission – Vice Chair Sandy Pressman

Alissa Roston, chairperson of the City's Centennial public art committee, provided an update to the commission on the "Arts of Palm" project.

A special commission meeting on December 17 was set for the purpose of bringing forth a proposal for the permanent protection of the Kusama. This will be presented to City Council at a meeting in January or February, 2014. Temporary protection to the Kusama has been

installed. The netting (similar to volleyball netting) was placed around the piece and will remain until permanent protection can be installed.

An update on FIAC was given. This is a very prestigious contemporary art show that is being proposed for April 23 -26, 2015 on a site at Foothill and 3rd.

The commission is finalizing a proposal of a sculpture by Carol Bove. The commission's preferred location is in Beverly Gardens Park at Beverly and Rodeo drives north of Santa Monica Boulevard in the northeast quadrant. The Recreation and Parks Commission will be consulted as to the proposed location. The proposal will then go to the city council liaisons.

The revised Fine Art Ordinance is in a final review process.

Health and Safety Commission – Chair Gail Millan

A CERT training program for businesses was held Nov. 19 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Fifty employees representing a variety of private sector businesses attended. There is currently a 15-plus person waiting list for the next class. The class was hosted by the Hilton and funded by the City and by a grant provided by Cedars Sinai. The class included information on disaster preparedness, fire, hazmat, first aid, terrorism, active shooter, search and rescue and organizing the workplace. A class for residents will be scheduled in the spring.

The new Dangerstoppers video about pet safety is out and available online.

City Council had asked the Commission to study the use and sales of e- cigarettes and tobacco. The Commission decided to make an initial recommendation that existing City laws and regulations on the sale and use of tobacco products be applied equally to all products defined as an electronic cigarette. Discussion will continue at the Dec. 16 meeting, at which time the commission will discuss other related issues including the operation of smoke and vapor shops in Beverly Hills.

Three new commissioners have joined the commission.

Human Relations Commission – Chair Rochelle Ginsberg

The commission is considering a temporary installation of an interactive art project from artist Nicole Maloney called OOMO project "Out of Many One: LA." The project represents diversity and the commission is in favor of finding a place for it in the City.

The commission has been presenting its Civil City, Civil Streets program to other commissions. The program is devoted to encouraging better interactions among drivers, pedestrians and

bike riders and is getting ready for a launch with banners, stickers and other media. The logo will be designed so that it clearly represents Beverly Hills.

The commission is also discussing a citywide read program, in which everyone would be encouraged to read a book with a multicultural message chosen by the commission.

There are eight applicants for one commission vacancy and two positions that are soon to be vacant. The Chair will contact the City Clerk's office to encourage the initiation of the interview process as soon as possible after the first of the year.

Planning Commission – Chair Brian Rosenstein

The commission voted unanimously to deny a request from owners of the 8767 Wilshire Blvd. office building to rent to medical providers. It will now go to the City Council for a final decision.

The commission held a study session on bulk and mass and how to get more control over what home looks like from the street. They are looking at requiring each home to have a minimum of three parking spaces for each house with additional parking spaces required based on square footage. The commission is also looking at granting more power to the Design Review Commission to allow them to better control bulk and mass and modulation.

The commission next week will consider the AKA project, which is asking for a zoning change to allow shorter term stays.

Public Works Commission – Vice Chair Ron Shalowitz

Two new commissioners were seated: Dr. Sandra Aronberg and Jeff Wolfe. The City Council formed an ad hoc committee to look at commission reforms including possible expansion of this and other commissions from five to seven seats and extending the terms.

Coming up, the commission will determine the scope of their involvement in the Santa Monica Boulevard Reconstruction Project.

The commission continues to work on a Water Master Plan, and may visit a Metropolitan Water District treatment plant as part of that process. They have had a conversation with MWD about possible monetary assistance for educational programs.

Recreation and Parks Commission – Chair Robbie Anderson

More than 150 seniors attended the Thanksgiving lunch provided by the Beverly Hills Firefighters' Association at the headquarters fire station.

The International ShowHouse at Greystone Mansion concluded on Sunday, Nov. 24. Stevie Wonder showed up on the last day and played the piano in his designer's room. Conversion of the firehouse at Greystone into a public restroom is approximately 25% complete. Completion is expected in March.

Restoration of the lily pond in Beverly Gardens Park continues with most work scheduled to be finished by the end of the calendar year. Final completion will take place in late March because pond lilies cannot be transplanted during their dormancy.

Staff will meet this week with representatives from Gruen Associates discuss the schedule for the construction of Gateway features on the southwest border along Olympic Boulevard and the intersection of Wilshire and San Vicente boulevards on the southeast. Construction completion for both is anticipated for late summer or early fall 2014.

The Roxbury Community Center is approximately 60% complete. Completion and move-in is scheduled to occur by late Spring 2014. Other related projects including the renovation of the athletic field and irrigation replacement are underway.

Bids will be solicited for the replacement of the existing field restroom and the children's playground areas next month. All of these improvements are anticipated to be completed at approximately the same time or before the completion of the Community Center.

Last month, Recreation & Parks staff and the commission chair provided an overview of the Division and some Beverly Hills history to Team Beverly Hills participants. The next Team BH program is scheduled in December with Traffic & Parking divisions.

Traffic and Parking Commission – Chair Alan Grushcow

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is now regulating private ride share companies that operate using cell phone apps, now known as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs). Examples are Uber and Sidecar. Now these companies must be licensed by the PUC rather than local jurisdictions such as Beverly Hills. Drivers must be trained, and go through a background check and be drug free and the companies must carry \$1 million per incident liability insurance.

The commission is still monitoring the issue of disabled parking abuse, but real change must take place at the state level. San Francisco is now studying the issue in a comprehensive way

with the goal of make statutory recommendations to the California legislature. They are bringing together the S.F. Mayor's Office on Disability, transportation officials, citizen advocacy groups and disabled advocacy groups. Possible recommendations include: the DMV providing photos of placard holders to parking officers, increased state oversight of approval process, establishing a certification database and revised eligibility criteria, eliminating free metered parking for disabled placard holders, and establishing reasonable time limits for disabled placard use of on street parking. Beverly Hills' type residential permit parking is not being studied by them at this time.

The next Mayor's Cabinet meeting will be held Jan. 6, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall Room 280B.